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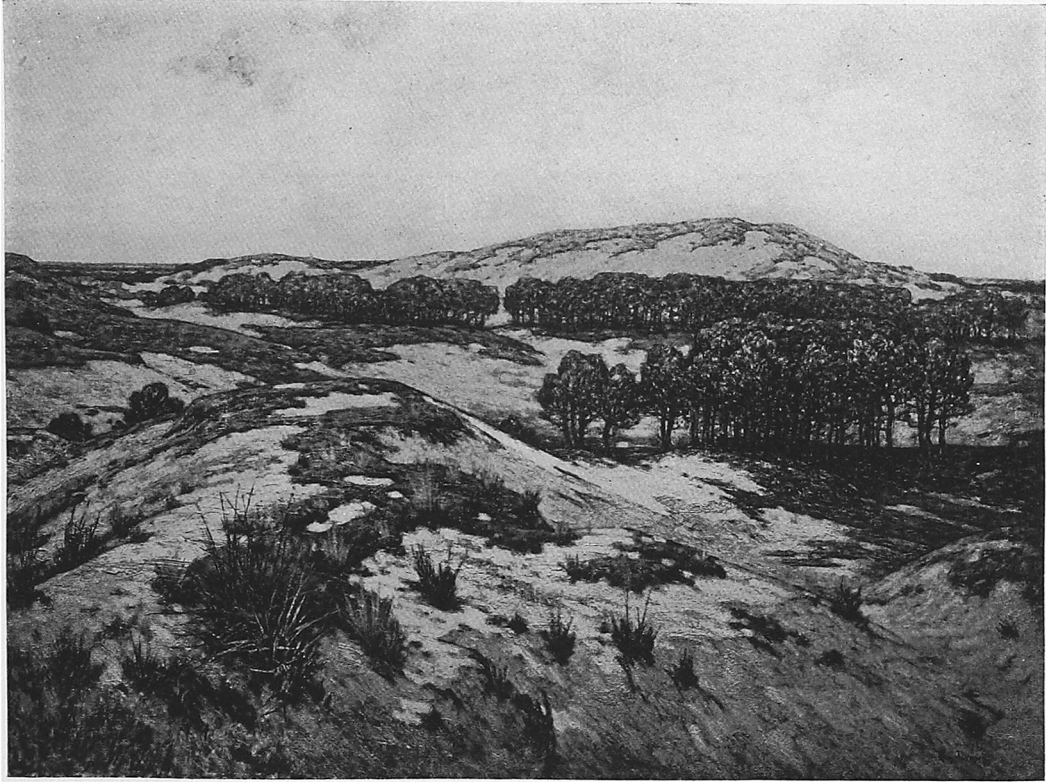
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"THE DUNES"  
By Roy Brown

—Purchased by The Friends of American Art

## Among the Art Galleries

By THE EDITOR

THROUGH the beneficence of the late A. A. Sprague and his family, the Art Institute has been enriched during the past month to the extent of \$140,000.00 in money and masterpieces. Mr. Sprague, who was one of the trustees of the Institute, made a bequest in his will of fifty thousand dollars to the institution for which he had done so much during his life. As a memorial to him the large El Greco which has hung in the Institute for some years—an illustration of which appeared in the January issue of the FINE ARTS JOURNAL—was purchased and presented by his family. Mrs. Sprague and her daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, also presented the Institute with Van Dyck's *Vir-*

*gin, Infant Christ and Saint Catherine*, reproduction of which is shown in this number. The following biography of Mr. Sprague from the February issue of the Bulletin of the Art Institute gives some idea of the importance of his work for the good of the community through its most worthy institutions:

Albert Arnold Sprague, for twenty-four years a trustee of the Art Institute, died suddenly on January 10, 1915. He was born in Randolph, Vt., in 1835, spent his youth on a farm, receiving his early school training at Kimball Union Academy, and later attended Yale College from which he graduated in 1859. In 1862 he came to Chicago and became the founder of the wholesale



PORTRAIT BUST By Chester Beach.  
—Purchased by The Friends of American Art

grocery house which is now Sprague, Warner & Co. Up to the very time of his death Mr. Sprague was vigorous and active in business affairs. After the great fire of 1871 he was one of the group of energetic and courageous Chicagoans who immediately set to work to rebuild their city and to stimulate its growth.

In 1882 Mr. Sprague helped in the organizing of the Commercial Club, of which he was later president. From 1887 to 1890 he was president of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. He also was a trustee of Rush Medical College, the Presbyterian Hospital and the Chicago Orphan Asylum, and a director of the Chicago Telephone Company, the Commonwealth Edison Company and the Northern Trust Company, of which he was one of the organizers.

Mr. Sprague was very much interested in the Presbyterian Hospital and the Chi-

cago Orphan Asylum, and they are both beneficiaries by his will. To the Art Institute he has bequeathed \$50,000. The income of this sum is to be paid to certain beneficiaries during their lifetime; and upon their death the principal sum will be paid to the Art Institute.

This bequest is a final testimony of Mr. Sprague's loyalty to the Art Institute, with which he has been closely connected since its organization in 1879 when he was elected a Governing Member. In 1890 he was made a trustee and since 1891 he has served on the Executive Committee. In 1914 he was made a Benefactor of the Art Institute, a title given to any friend who has contributed \$25,000 or its equivalent. Mr. Sprague was unfailingly interested in the welfare of the Institute and was a most faithful attendant at the meetings of the Board of Trustees.

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THE Friends of American Art have presented the Art Institute of Chicago with Roy Brown's large painting of *The Dunes*, which was so much admired when exhibited recently at the Thurbur Galleries, and with a beautiful head in marble by Chester Beach. Landscape art almost seems to have reached a point of perfection among American men of today, so many aspects of the great outdoors are reflected with such consummate understanding in our cotemporary exhibitions. Mr. Brown is among the most interesting of our landscape painters, being a master of more than one method. His canvases display such various treatments of the varying moods of nature that they might pass as the works of different men. To many *The Dunes* represents Mr. Brown's most charming mode of thought and execution. It is a minor theme of quiet tones for the most part, with touches of warm color and blue tinged shadows. The sand seems packed and the herbage fresh as after a light shower. The sky is serene with thin, horizontal clouds above a distant glimpse



*THE VIRGIN—INFANT CHRIST AND ST. CATHERINE*  
*By VAN DYCK*

*—Presented to the Art Institute by Mrs. Elizabeth Coolidge*



MOTHER AND CHILD  
By HUGO BALLIN

*Courtesy Thurber Art Galleries*

of dark water. There is a feeling of tranquillity and solitude about the picture expressive of the spirit of lonely lands. It may not have created as much comment as his other large canvas of *The Stacks* which was also exhibited at Thurber's, but it is perhaps the more widely, if not the more intensely, appreciated of the two. Chester Beach's work is an effective bit of sculpture well worthy of the dignity conferred upon it by the Friends of American Art.

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An exhibition of nineteen canvases by Louis Ritman opened at the Institute February 23rd to extend until March the 9th. This exhibition abounds with fresh and tender color and with glorious sunshine, the pictures being all of fair flowers and fair women in luxurious gardens. Their strongest note of interest is the light, the glowing tremulous, effulgent sunlight broken by clouds or branches, strained through silken parasols, falling on flowers and faces in varying and beautiful effects. Mr. Ritman's manner of painting flowers, foliage and grasses, is individual, appearing at first sight to be intricate, accidental and quite unstudied, yet out of it all certain effects of sunlight emerge golden and clear. Among the most beautiful of his pictures are those of lovely ladies in the sun-flecked shade of summer trees. One of his nudes in this style is exceedingly clever, the lightness of the soft purple shadow over the flesh and the warmth of the sun spots recalling the actual feeling of the beating down of the summer sun.

*The Yellow Jacket* is another charming picture of a very different type, which employs an effect we have seen before in paintings by Lawton Parker and Richard Miller and many another artist who loves the light, namely, that of a fair figure against a window. Here the light is tempered by a shade of strips of green bamboo so that the effect is soft and harmonious without sharp contrast.

Though these pictures seem at first impression to be broad in treatment they are found upon examination to be, in many instances, rather thinly painted, the texture of the canvas adding much to their effects. Mr. Ritman has a method of applying different colors in touches laid on side by side, that is seen at its best in a little landscape called "A Grey Day." In this picture there is no gray whatever, only heliotrope, yellows and dull greens. The eye, however, blends the colors into true grey tones which simulate exactly the tender mists of early spring. Dark blue shadows are another characteristic of his flower gardens which seem altogether natural.

Whatever else one might say of this artist it could in justice be remarked that he has made us see the light, and in our enjoyment thereof we do not analyze either critically or appreciatively because we are so agreeably dazzled by its effulgence that we forget to look for or care for many other things.

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**A**N exhibition of a selected number of the works of Hugo Ballin will be the attraction at the Thurber Galleries. It will be remembered that this artist has been a frequent exhibitor in these galleries and those who know his works from these and other exhibitions will not overlook the present event. Mr. Ballin's exhibition will not create any great amount of discussion, as there is no possible room for differences of opinion as to the charm of his canvases, which possess the universal appeal of pure beauty. His pictures are refreshing, in that they are not of the modern school. This is not uttered critically but merely with a proper appreciation of the joy afforded by contrasts and by freedom from "fashion" in art.

His art takes one back to art and beauty without the distraction of the attention through conspicuous methods. It is what he has done and not how he has done it which the eye and heart gratefully receive.





"A SUMMER IDEAL"  
By HUGO BALLIN

*Courtesy Thurber Art Galleries*

Those who love the aesthetic, the pastoral, the serenely lovely, will find this one of the most satisfactory displays of the year. These pictures are poetic, not in a sense that this adjective is generally employed in art to describe a dreamy, hazy, somewhat impenetrable atmosphere, but rather in the matter of their subject and its gracious treatment, and in their essential message of grace. They do not present the scenes of the real world of today, but rather glimpses of a dream world of bygone days.

The richness and taste of his color schemes can be felt and enjoyed without

the accompaniment of ingenious argument to convince the eye through the mind. Every one of the dozen canvases in this collection calls forth in the beholder that spontaneous delight which we know as the aesthetic emotion. Though the charm of these pictures may in a measure be elusive and difficult of analysis, it transmits itself readily to the mind like the subtle harmonies of music.

Choice is always a matter of personal taste, and allowance must be made for this fact in accepting the canvas presenting a mother and child as the most beautiful and inspired among the twelve. This theme

despite its long popularity never loses its instinctive appeal, however, it is not the theme but the manner of presentation which raises this picture above its fellows. It somewhat resembles the work entitled "Hope" contributed by Mr. Ballin to the recent exhibition of American Art at the Art Institute.

After this *The Lute Player* appeals most insistently to those who love pictures of people. It presents the figure of a beautiful woman in the dress of the romance ages, seated playing a lute, in the midst of a pastoral landscape with a shepherd and sheep in the background. "Elaine, the Fair, Elaine the lovable," and all the other heroines of those brave days of old, all the old charm of song and story when moted castles were as common as flat buildings are now, arises in one's mind with faint and delightfully blended memories like the odors of pot pourri, as one gazes upon the auburn beauty of what might be a composite heroine of all the tales of knighthood.

*The Florentine* is another richly wrought study of a fair woman in noble attire against a decorative background, which would prove a fine bit of decoration in the settings of a luxurious interior. Though Ballin is said to belong to no school, his paintings affect one like the works of some of the pre-Raphaelites, Rosetti particularly recurring to the mind, though it could not be said that the pictures definitely resemble any particular works of these men.

Ballin's landscapes, like his figure studies, are essentially romantic and fanciful, painted symbolically rather than with deliberate realism and without suggestion of impressionism. They are the sylvan settings for the classic play. A *Summer Ideal*, the largest of these canvases, while full of sky and air, finds its chief interest in the myth-

ological group of nymphs and fauns surrounding a wild young centauress.

*The Forest Pool* introduces a vestal virgin, her white robes gleaming through the depths of a dark wood. The flickering red flame of her lamp represents life, and the deep blue pool before which she pauses signifies the unknown and unfathomable future. *Sappho*, a large canvas showing the poetess in rapt attitude beneath the trees, has called forth from Louis Untermeyer the following verses, entitled "Protests":

Something impelled her from the hearth;  
Whispers and winds drew her along;  
But still, unconscious of the earth,  
She read her book of golden song.

Old legends stirred her as she read  
Of life victoriously unfurled,  
Of glories gone but never dead,  
And beauty that redeemed the world.

"Oh Songs," she sighed, "your world was fair;  
My own holds no such lovely things;  
No glow, no magic anywhere."  
And then, a start, a flash of wings—

And, with the rush of surging seas,  
Over her swept the world's replies;  
The lyric hills, the buoyant breeze  
And all the sudden singing skies!

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The annual exhibition of the works of Chicago artists opens at the Art Institute on March 2nd to continue throughout the month. This event is second in interest only to the exhibition of American art, and the collection is somewhat extensive, comprising five rooms of paintings and one of sculpture. The Chicago Society of Etchers will exhibit at the same time so that all lines of artistic endeavor will be represented. The FINE ARTS JOURNAL for April will contain extended reviews of these exhibitions with illustrations from among the most interesting of the offerings of native genius.